

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY

CHAMBERS OF
ESTHER SALAS
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

MARTIN LUTHER KING
COURTHOUSE
50 WALNUT ST.
ROOM 5076
NEWARK, NJ 07101
973-297-4887

April 1, 2022

LETTER ORDER

Re: *American General Life Insurance Company v. Thomas, et al.*
Civil Action No. 18-1349 (ES) (JSA)

Dear Parties:

On January 31, 2018, American General Life Insurance Company filed this Interpleader Complaint with respect to a life insurance policy (the “Policy”) it issued to the late Dawn N. Drakeford. (D.E. No. 1). On March 8, 2022, the Honorable Jessica S. Allen, U.S.M.J., issued a Report and Recommendation that the Undersigned release the Policy’s funds to the “Dawn Drakeford Trust For The Benefit Of Jacqueline Drakeford” (the “Trust”), minus any applicable administrative fees, for Ms. Jacqueline A. Drakeford’s benefit. (D.E. No. 53). Ms. Jacqueline A. Drakeford is the undisputed sole beneficiary under the Policy. (*Id.*). Magistrate Judge Allen also recommended that the Undersigned dismiss the Interpleader Complaint. (*Id.*). The parties had fourteen days to file and serve any objections to Magistrate Judge Allen’s Report and Recommendation pursuant to Local Civil Rule 72.1(c)(2). To date, neither party has filed any objections.

Having reviewed the parties’ submissions and Magistrate Judge Allen’s Report and Recommendation, and for the reasons stated therein,

IT IS on this 1st day of April 2022,

ORDERED that this Court ADOPTS Magistrate Judge Allen’s Report and Recommendation in full, as the Opinion of this Court; and it is further

ORDERED that the Policy funds deposited with the Court’s registry be RELEASED and PAID into the Trust for Ms. Jacqueline A. Drakeford’s benefit, minus any applicable administrative fees; and it is further

ORDERED that the Policy funds shall be released and paid into the Trust by way of a check issued to “Dawn Drakeford Trust f/b/o/ Jacqueline Drakeford” sent by certified mail/return receipt to the Trustee, Shane Thomas, at 121 Royal Drive, Apartment #494, Piscataway, New Jersey 08854; and it is further

ORDERED that the Clerk of Court shall TERMINATE docket entry number 53; and it is further

ORDERED that the Interpleader Complaint (D.E. No. 1) is DISMISSED; and it is further

ORDERED that the Clerk of Court shall mail a copy of this Order by regular U.S. Mail to Mr. Shane Thomas, Ms. Jacqueline R. Drakeford,¹ and Ms. Jacqueline A. Drakeford.

s/*Esther Salas*
Esther Salas, U.S.D.J.

¹ The Court is in receipt of Mr. Thomas's letter dated March 15, 2022, indicating that Ms. Jacqueline R. Drakeford passed away and requesting that she and Mr. Clifford Drakeford be removed from this matter. (D.E. No. 54). First, Mr. Clifford is not a named party in this action. Second, the Court denies Mr. Thomas's request as moot in light of all interested parties' agreement on November 4, 2020, that the funds should be released for the benefit of Ms. Jacqueline A. Drakeford as the rightful sole beneficiary. (See D.E. No. 53 at 3 (citing D.E. No. 40)). In the alternative, the Court denies *without prejudice* Mr. Thomas's request absent verification of Ms. Jacqueline R. Drakeford's passing and legal authority that her claim is not extinguished.